

Great American Smokeout Efforts a Success!

*By Sarah Gronberg, Media/Policy Advisor
Tobacco Use Prevention Program*

Smokers across Kansas took advantage of the Great American Smokeout on Nov. 17 to begin the process of quitting their nicotine addiction. In partnership with the American Cancer Society, KDHE's Office of Health Promotion launched two successful promotions for the Great American Smokeout and Kansas' toll-free Quitline. **(1.866.KAN.STOP)**



Topeka's WIBW-TV held a call-in during their 10 p.m. newscast the night before the Great American Smokeout. A panel of experts from KDHE and the American Cancer Society answered phones, guiding callers to the Quitline and providing them with information on reducing or eliminating their tobacco habit. KDHE Secretary Roderick Bremby helped answer phones and participated in a live interview during the newscast to discuss the benefits of not smoking and to relay information on the great resources Kansans have to quit smoking.

Ninety-four people called during the half-hour newscast. Callers were given information on the Quitline. The Quitline call center reported an increased number of calls the day before and day of the Great American Smokeout.

On the day of the Great American Smokeout, coalitions around the state held various activities encouraging people to kick the habit. In Topeka, the American Cancer Society and KDHE's Office of Health Promotion held a cigarette "turn in." Smokers had the opportunity to turn in a pack of cigarettes and get a coupon for a free cold turkey sandwich from Jersey Mike's sandwich shop. About a dozen smokers took advantage of this offer to begin their quit attempt. More than 50 people took information on the Quitline for themselves or smokers in their lives. KMAJ Radio and Jersey Mike's were great partners in this effort.

Both activities resulted in substantial media awareness in the Topeka market. For more information about free help to quit using tobacco, call the toll-free Kansas Quitline at 1-866-KAN-STOP.



Left Photo: **KDHE Epidemiologist Harlen Hays exchanges several packages of cigarettes for free turkey sandwiches during the Great American Smokeout.**



Right Photo: **Hays discusses the benefits of quitting smoking with the local media.**